

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT



IN CHARGE OF

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THE NEW SCHOOL FOR NURSES IN PARIS

THIS winter will be marked with a red stone in the history of the modern nursing movement in Paris, for the beautiful building designed for a training school for the nurses of the large hospitals of Paris has been completed and opened, and the new era in nursing, being thus recognized and prepared for by the city government of Paris, must now inevitably develop and spread widely in the city hospitals, and this fine building will be regarded as a model for other large cities.

The new school ranks with the most beautiful and most capacious training schools of the world. French architecture is especially characterized by great spaciousness and generosity in dimensions, harmony and refinement in line and decoration, and to these special features in the new school must be added also a most agreeable color scheme, light, sunny, and cheerful, of soft pleasing yellow and white with pale green and gray touches. The Assistance Publique has not spared time, thought, or money in the creation of this school, and to my mind M. Mesureur, and those others who have especially stood by him in its inception, could leave no more worthy or satisfactory monument of their administration.

The school is planned for one hundred and fifty pupils and their directress, and the scholastic side of the period of training has received unusually ample recognition. The architects have not been allowed simply to treat the building as a home, but the demands of study and instruction have been planned for on a scale which make it, I believe, quite unique. I do not recall any other school which possesses its own theatre for lectures and demonstrations, though I well remember many years ago having a dream of a training school which should include a theatre where the practical teaching could be given in class. Now here it is, and one can see what excellent nursing clinics can be given. The school also has a magnificently big room as library and museum. Around the walls are shelves and drawers for paraphernalia, niches for manikins and skeletons; in the centre stand the double shelves for books of reference. The room holds some sixty-odd desks and chairs without a sugges-

tion of crowding, and beside this there are, on the different floors, six small rooms for quiet study, each one with eight or ten desks. *Materia medica* will be taught in an ample room which is to be fitted up as a pharmacy. This, as well as the extensive kitchens, is on the basement floor. I believe that the equipment of some of our schools in their diet-kitchen work still takes the lead of all others. But in France every one understands the art of scientific cooking, and the "tisanes" or vegetable teas which form so important a part of the nurse's armory here will be taught in the pharmacy.

All the bed-rooms are single, with running water, a full-length mirror in one side of the wardrobe, electric lights, one of which is a movable droplight, white enamel iron-frame beds with brass knobs, light wood furniture and floors, with one rug.

The windows are very large, and the wall, of soft yellow tone, has a hard washable finish which is not hard-looking. The *Surveillante Générale* has a suite of seven rooms—her own kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and two bed-rooms, with bath, etc.; these rooms open into a private corridor, which runs to a private staircase communicating only with her offices below on the ground floor. Thus, though this suite lies in the front of the main building, its seclusion is complete.

There are two dining halls, one for juniors and one for seniors, most beautiful rooms of great spaciousness with large windows on three sides. The tables follow these three sides and are made of slabs of red-brown marble, each one large enough for ten or twelve persons. There are two or three small parlors or reception rooms and then a magnificently large "recreation room" where the piano, round tables, etc., are found. Here are also windows on three sides, and of unusual breadth so that the room almost seems to be out-of-doors. The windows, as also those in the dining halls, are each hung with one long, full, heavy white curtain hung on a rod and pushed to one side. The floors here are of yellow and white tiles.

Altogether the school makes a most delightful impression. It is lit by electricity, very artistically arranged to shed a soft light, and has a central heating plant, which of course is not at all common on the other side. It stands on an open space in the domain of the *Salpêtrière* and at the back has a charming little garden for the nurses, where they can have hammocks and take their tea.

Already the nurses for the first year, one-half the whole number, are in the school, and next year the other half will be taken.

It is probable that the school will not exhibit its final, developed character until the new hospital, now being built on the same grounds,

is finished. This new hospital, which is to replace the old Pitié, will be a general hospital of acute service in every branch, and is destined as the training ground for the pupils of the school, but until its completion they are being sent into the other hospitals of the city. When that final stage arrives we must hope to see the directress take her proper place in the hospital as well as in the school, and one may confidently expect that, unless M. Mesureur and M. Montreuil are too strongly opposed in this by the medical chiefs, this will be the final reform brought about by these two liberal and broad-minded men, whose single-hearted efforts to bring about an ideal condition of things are not justly to be measured by immediate results, but by the difficulties in the way.

The administration has selected two of its most capable women to direct the new school,—Mlle. Duconseil, now in residence there, and Mlle. Hénault, the present head of the Maternité. They are both trained midwives, and were selected for their general ability and executive powers. While we would, quite naturally, have been glad to see nurses placed in these posts, yet, recognizing the difficulties at the outset of this experiment, we feel that encouragement and support are wholly in place at present, and cordially extend our best wishes for the prosperity of the new school.

The rules of the school, which space does not allow us to reprint, foreshadow the sphere of the directress and show the intentions of the *Assistance Publique*. Briefly condensed, the *Surveillante Générale* is the supreme authority in the school, subject only to the administrative supremacy of the director of the hospital. She has the entire control of the practical instruction, both in class and in the wards, and supervision of lectures and studies. She has two assistants, one for the junior and one for the senior class, to assist her in the practical teaching, in wards as well as home. She will select monitresses from among the most responsible pupils, to help in maintaining discipline and to conduct quiz classes. The pupils are to have ample time for study. The schedule in the rules appears to give them an eight-hour day in the wards, and every month the directress will hand in a schedule of their time to be visé by the administration. The pupils will have three weeks' vacation each year, but will only be allowed to go out (into the city) on request of parents or relations.

As Parisian etiquette is strict and the pupils not allowed to go out at their own discretion, excursions and sight-seeing under supervision will be planned for them on Sundays and festivals. Finally, there are four formal varieties of official reprimand for ill-doers, followed by warning of expulsion, and expulsion.

The course is for two years, but the pupils must contract to remain three years after that, in the employ of the administration, as paid seniors or head nurses, or else to pay an indemnity. The probation time is two months.

In general, the rules and regulations, plans of study and lectures, are very similar to our own. The lecturers will receive schedules in skeleton, framed by the administration and the directress, on which they will build their lectures, making these original and practical. Massage will be taught in the wards; cooking for the sick in the home kitchens, with practice in the ward diet kitchens.

Instruction will be given in ward management, hospital organization and the different departments of the public charities. It is allowable to say that the new school owes much to the counsel of Mlle. Chaptal, who is the only woman at present on the Training School Committee and who also is counted among the Faculty, for she will give a course of twenty lectures on Social and Professional Ethics.

THE LAST ENGLISH DANGER.

ENGLAND is a land of sensational crises in nursing affairs. The last attack on good standards has been a peculiarly dastardly one, as it is directed against the most helpless class of patients, the very poor.

In brief, the Metropolitan Asylums Board in October proposed a new By-law, lowering the status of the matrons (who are also superintendents of nursing) in the hospitals and asylums under its control, from "principal" to "second-class" officers. This technical change degrades the matrons by an entire rank and makes their position inferior even to that of engineer-in-chief, accountant, clerk, and chaplain. Thus their entire disciplinary authority is at one stroke swept away. When one reads of the condition of the hospitals sixty years ago under undivided male control, and then sees what the matrons have done since then to save these poor patients, the wickedness of this attempt appears more flagrant than any other recently recorded backward step. *The British Journal of Nursing* of course sounded an immediate alarm; the Matrons' Council instantly convened a meeting of protest which was jammed to the doors; other public bodies also protested vigorously. The final outcome at time of our going to press was still in doubt.

ONE of the most frankly outspoken of the Paris Conference papers was read by the Secretary of the Holland Nurses' Association and is re-

printed in this number of the JOURNAL. It has aroused no little resentment in Holland, and yet, no one can read this report without feeling that it was written from the very depths of earnest feeling based on experience. Warm personal regard and respect for individuals among the matrons of Holland cannot blind one to the fact that, as hospital officials and as a body, they have not taken the lead in nursing questions. In such matters they might well take some lessons from our American superintendents of nurses.

The Holland Nurses Association, which will, in 1909, become a member of the International Council of Nurses, has entered a petition in the Department of the Interior, urging State Registration of nurses.

In connection with the subject of practical training, Mme. Gillot's paper, *The Bulletin Professionnel*, recalls an address given eleven years ago by Dr. Letulle (who also spoke at the Paris Conference) to one of the groups of women organized for Red Cross nursing. In this he questioned very frankly the value of the kind of instruction which physicians were imparting to these volunteers, and admitted that it tended only to make them "half-doctors" and not nurses at all. He candidly admitted his own sins in this regard, in having lectured on heredity to a class of women who were supposed to be learning practical emergency work, and gave many ludicrous instances of misplaced theoretical and defective practical knowledge, which had come under his notice in these classes of dilettantes.

Dr. Letulle is so genial, courteous, and appreciative that well-trained nurses would find it a privilege to work under him. He is one of the chiefs of the Boucicaut, an extremely beautiful and modern hospital, and which would be an ideal one to open a training school in. Dr. Letulle will attend the Tuberculosis Congress in Washington next autumn.

The first action of the newly enfranchised women of Finland has been to bring in a petition to the government asking for generous state aid in the instruction of household economics and domestic science and the support of competent women teachers in these branches.

Inspiring events are occurring in the woman movement. Norway has bestowed the Parliamentary franchise on certain classes of women, in all, about 300,000. Sweden has made them eligible for municipal officials, Denmark has placed them upon Boards of Public Charities, and in Great Britain the recent struggles for legislation have secured their right

to serve as town and county councillors, aldermen, and mayors. In November last, three women were elected as town councillors. In Holland, a revision of the Constitution has been presented to Parliament for action, which, among other provisos, gives women the ballot and the right to hold office. If this constitution is accepted, our Dutch sisters will have full civil rights.



THE French War Department is preparing to introduce modern trained nursing into the military hospitals, and has appointed a certain number of the graduates of the private school in Paris directed by Mlle. Chaptal, to begin the experiment in Val-de-Grâce, a military hospital in Paris. The nurses will have no administrative duties, but solely the care of the sick. It will be of great interest to follow the outcome of this new departure. The orderlies will be under the nurses' orders.

INTERESTING correspondence in *The German Nurses Journal*, between district or parish nurses in rural localities and small towns, shows that a "Gemeindeschwester" may sometimes be a friendly visitor, sometimes an almoner, and may even be called upon to add the teaching of little children to her nursing work. One nurse reports that in summer she gives seven hours daily to a kindergarten and two hours to nursing, while others teach knitting classes, or themselves sew for poor patients, in the mild seasons when there is little illness. Another, however, whose district comprises five villages, undertakes nothing but nursing pure and simple.

THE subject of "Public School Hygiene" received a distinct impetus at the Second International Congress devoted to that subject last summer, and the details of the disinfection of buildings was especially considered. Medical inspection was exhaustively treated, but the work of the school nurse did not receive sufficient consideration.

IN connection with the national work of saving child-life the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography recently held in Berlin paid much attention to the midwife, her education, social standing, and competency to teach the care of infants. It was generally agreed that, while her opportunities are great, she fails notably as a factor in promoting the enlightened and hygienic rearing of infants.